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STATE OF ILLINOIS
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
SPRINGFIELD

April 30, 1940

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To the Members of the Sixty-first General Assembly
of the State of Illinois,
in First Special Session Assembled:

Since the adjournment of the last regular session of the General Assembly, certain matters have presented themselves which, in my opinion, require the convening of this honorable legislative body in extraordinary session.

Foremost among these is the subject of increasing the maximum, monthly award for needy aged persons to $40.00 from the present limit of $30.00, in order that this State may obtain for them the full amount of Federal assistance now available. At the regular session of the Sixty-first General Assembly, House Bill No. 914 was passed, making this increase in the expectation that Congress would amend the Social Security Act so as to provide a similar maximum allowance. However, although I heartily endorsed this particular feature of House Bill No. 914, I was obliged to veto the bill because the proposed Federal law not only had not been passed but had been deadlocked in a conference committee for three weeks. I delayed action until August 3rd, the last day allowed me under our Constitution for consideration of our bill, hoping that the Federal bill would be passed and be approved. At that time no one could predict with certainty that the Federal law would be changed so that the Federal government would pay one-half of the increased rate. As a matter of fact, the Congressional conference committee finally reached an agreement, the bill was passed and was signed by President Roosevelt. I, therefore, feel that there will be no opposition to a bill making such increase. However, measures should also be adopted by you to guarantee the ability of this State to satisfy the added financial burden which it must assume in order to effectuate such increase.

Payment of awards has always been made from the General Revenue Fund; but further appropriation therefrom is impossible without drastic curtailment of vital State functions, unless added revenue

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is provided. During recent years, this fund has been steadily depleted by the ever-mounting cost of providing poor relief and old age assistance. At the same time, no new State taxes have been enacted. I feel certain that you will give the utmost consideration to the various aspects of this problem and that you will arrive at a satisfactory solution. To promise additional assistance without providing funds for its fulfillment would be a futile gesture and a heartless blow to the hopes of our deserving aged for a more adequate subsistence.

At the first session of the Seventy-sixth Congress, numerous changes were made in the Federal Unemployment Tax Act which substantially affect the provisions of our Unemployment Compensation Act. The lack of uniformity between the two laws is a source of inconvenience and unnecessary expense to employers subject to them. Several millions of dollars annually in contributions could be saved by Illinois employers without impairing the rights of employees to benefits. Failure to alter our law in this regard will result in the continuance of a heavier obligation on Illinois employers than is placed on employers in other states, which situation should be remedied by amending our present law.

The Sixty-first General Assembly enacted amendments to the Chicago Sanitary District Act and the Forest Preserve District Act. Thereafter, in the closing hours of that Assembly, additional measures amending the same sections of said Acts were enacted. These later enactments made no reference to the previous amendments. Recent decisions of the Illinois Supreme Court indicate that the amendments first enacted may have been repealed by the later measures. Close examination of the history and purposes of the bills involved discloses that the General Assembly intended no repeal; on the contrary, it is clearly evident that all the legislation enacted was intended to be effective. Until the matter is clarified, however, by remedial legislation, the governmental units affected will be precluded from obtaining the benefits intended by such laws. For the calendar year of 1940, the

Chicago Sanitary District has levied a tax for corporate purposes at the rate of fifteen cents on the one hundred dollars of assessed valuation, which rate will produce approximately $3,500,000. The proclamation for this extraordinary session permits the enactment of a law to increase such tax for the current year and for each of the years 1941, 1942 and 1943 to not more than $5,000,000. This additional sum of approximately $1,500,000 should, with economical and efficient administration, prove adequate for the needs of the District to meet the added cost of operating sewage treatment plants recently erected in compliance with a mandate of the United States Supreme Court. I earnestly request your thoughtful consideration of this matter and urge upon you the necessity of enacting legislation which will clarify and correct the uncertain status of these several amendments.

There are other subjects of particular importance to various communities and governmental units, throughout the State, for your consideration at this special session which are briefly explained in the wording of the proclamation. To discuss such subjects further in this message is unnecessary.

Numerous requests have been received by me, from all parts of this State, for many other subjects to be included in this call. Although most of such requests were upon meritorious subjects, yet, in my opinion, their consideration can well be deferred until the next regular session of the General Assembly.

I have suggested that the preparation of bills to be introduced at this session be completed prior to its convening in order that you may enter upon your consideration of them without delay. The subjects included should not necessitate a protracted session.

In conclusion, I wish to take this opportunity to say a few words about Mr. DeWitt Billman, Executive Secretary of the Legislative Reference Bureau. Six months ago, Mr. Billman was stricken seriously ill, and after many months of anxious and apprehensive waiting, I can now report with deep personal gratification that he is definitely, though slowly, convalescing. I shall never forget the many, many hours we spent together upon vexatious problems of State and the brilliant and assiduous efforts of Mr. Billman in seeking their solution. The State of Illinois is indeed indebted to him for almost a quarter of a

century of devoted public service. And to the members of the General Assemblies of this State which met during his tenure of office, his impartial service will ever be remembered. It is my sincere and dearest hope, the fulfillment of which, I am happy to say, seems assured, that Mr. Dillman will soon again be restored to the full measure of his health and vigor.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Henry Horner

Governor

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